Dogs & Men

by Henry C. Merwin

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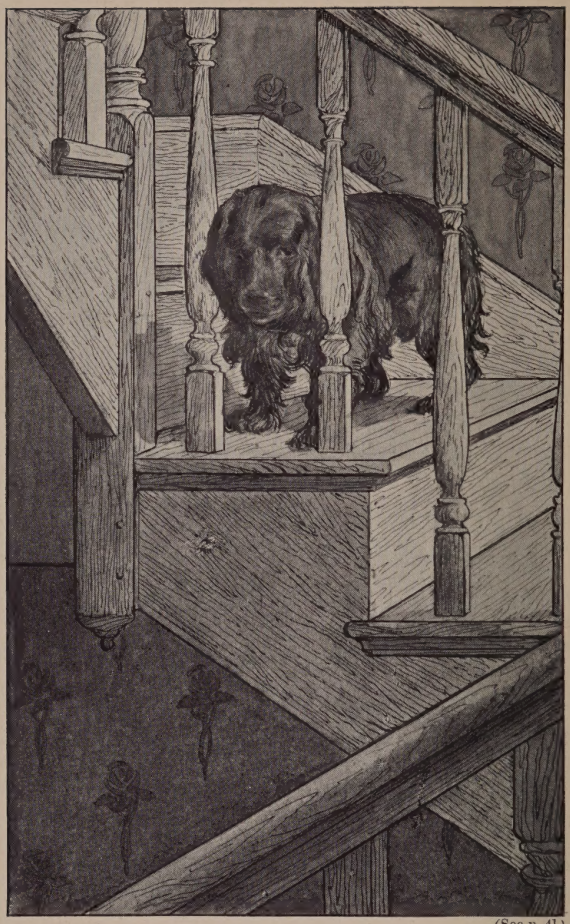
DOGS AND MEN



(See p. 41)

PEDRO

Calling his companions to bed

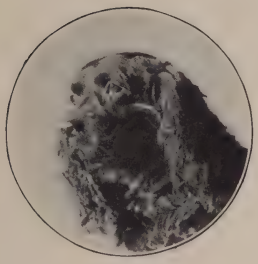
DOGS AND MEN

BY

HENRY C. MERWIN

Author of "Road, Track, and Stable," etc.

ILLUSTRATED



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ILLUSTRATIONS

PEDRO (page 41) *Frontispiece*
Calling his companions to bed

CARUS (page 39) *Title-page*
The aristocratic dog

DON 6
Owned by Miss Ellen Mason

SYLVAN ROAMER 16
The dog of the philanthropist

TOBY 36
A dog that never did a wrong thing; courageous, conscientious, and sensitive

From a drawing by Mr. C. L. Andrews

DOGS AND MEN

DOGS AND MEN

THERE are men and women in the world who, of their own free will, live a dogless life, not knowing what they miss; and for them this essay, securely placed in the dignified *Atlantic*, there to remain so long as libraries and books shall endure, is chiefly written. Let them not pass it by in scorn, but rather stop to consider what can be said of the animal as a fellow-being entitled to their sympathy and having, perhaps, a like destiny with themselves.

As to those few persons who are not only dogless but dog-haters, they should excite pity rather than resentment. The man who hates a good dog is abnormal, and cannot help it. I once knew such a man, a money-lender long since passed away, whose life was largely a crusade against dogs, carried on through newspapers, pamphlets, and in conversation. He used to declare that he had often been bitten by these animals, and that, on one occasion, a terrier actually jumped on the street-car in which he was riding, took a small piece out of his leg (a mere soupçon, no doubt), and then jumped off, — all without apparent provoca-

tion, and in a moment of time. Probably this story, strange as it may sound, was substantially true. The perceptions of the dog are wonderfully acute.

A recent occurrence may serve as the converse of the money-lender's story. A lost collie, lame and nearly starved, was taken in, fed, and cared for, by a household of charitable persons, who, however, did not like or understand dogs, and were anxious to get rid of this one, provided that a good home could be found for him. In the course of a week there came to call upon them in her buggy an old lady who is extremely fond of dogs, and who pos-

sesses that combination of a masterful spirit with deep affection which acts like witchcraft upon the lower animals. The collie was brought out, and the story of his arrival was related at length. Meanwhile the old lady and the dog looked each other steadfastly in the eye. "Do you want to come with me, doggie?" she said at last, not really meaning to take him. Up jumped the dog, and sat down beside her, and could not be dislodged by any entreaties or commands, — and all parties were loath to use force. She took him home, but brought him back the next day, intending to leave him behind her. Again, however, the dog

DON

refused to be parted from his new and real friend. He bestowed a perfunctory wag of the tail upon his benefactors, — he was not ungrateful; but, like all dogs, he sought not chiefly meat and bones and a comfortable place by the fire, but affection and caresses. The dog does not live that would refuse to forsake his dinner for the companionship of his master.

The mission of the dog — I say it with all reverence — is the same as the mission of Christianity, namely, to teach mankind that the universe is ruled by love. Ownership of a dog tends to soften the hard hearts of men. There are two great mysteries about

the lower animals: one, the suffering which they have to endure at the hands of man; the other, the wealth of affection which they possess, and which for the most part is unexpended. All animals have this capacity for loving other creatures, man included. Crows, for example, show it to a remarkable degree. As much latent affection goes to waste in every flock of crows that flies overhead as would fit a human household for heaven. A crow and a dog, if kept together, will become almost as fond of each other as of their master.

Surely this fact, this capacity of the lower animals to love, not only man,

but one another, is the most significant, the most deserving to be pondered, the most important in respect to their place in the universe, of all the facts that can be learned about them. Compared with it how trivial is anything that the zoölogist or biologist or the physiologist can tell us about the nature of the lower animals!

The most beautiful sight in the world, I once heard it said (by myself, to be honest), is the expression in the eyes of an intelligent, sweet-tempered pup, — a pup old enough to take an interest in things about him, and yet so young as to imagine that everybody will be good to him; so young as not to

fear that any man or boy will kick him, or that any dog will take away his bone. In the eyes of such a pup there is a look of confiding innocence, a consciousness of his own weakness and inexperience, a desire to love and be loved, which are irresistible. In older dogs one is more apt to notice an eager, anxious, inquiring look, as if they were striving to understand things which the Almighty had placed beyond their mental grasp; and the nearest approach to a really human expression is seen in dogs suffering from illness. Heine, who, as the reader well knows, served a long apprenticeship to pain, somewhere says that pain refines even

the lower animals; and all who are familiar with dogs in health and in disease will perceive the truth of this statement. I have seen in the face of an intelligent dog, suffering acutely from distemper, a look so human as to be almost terrifying; as if I had accidentally caught a glimpse of some deep-lying trait in the animal which nature had intended to conceal from mortal gaze.

The dog, in fact, makes a continual appeal to the sympathies of his human friends, and thus tends to prevent them from becoming hard or narrow. There are certain families, especially perhaps in New England, and most of all, no doubt, in Boston, who need to be re-

generated, and might be regenerated by keeping a dog, provided that they went about it in the proper spirit. A distinguished preacher and author, himself a Unitarian, remarked recently, in an address to Unitarians, that they were usually the most self-satisfied people that he ever met. It was a casual remark, and perhaps neither he nor those who heard it appreciated its full significance. However, the preacher was probably thinking not so much of Unitarians as of a certain kind of person often found in this neighborhood, and not necessarily professing any particular form of religion. We all know the type. When a man *invariably* has

money in the bank, and is respectable and respected, was graduated at Harvard, has a decorous wife and children, has never been carried away by any passion or enthusiasm, knows the right people, and conforms strictly to the customs of good society; and when this sort of thing has been going on for, perhaps, two or three generations, then there is apt to creep into the blood a coldness that would chill the heart of a bronze statue. Such persons are really degenerates of their peculiar kind, and need to be saved, perhaps by desperate measures. Let them elope with the cook; let them get religion of a violent Methodistic, or of an intense

Ritualistic, kind (the two forms have much in common); or if they cannot get religion, let them get a dog, give him the run of the house, love him and spoil him, and so, by the blessing of Providence, their salvation may be effected.

Reformers and philanthropists should always keep dogs, in order that the spontaneous element may not wholly die out of them. Their tendency is to regard the human race as a problem, and particular persons as "cases" to be dealt with, not according to one's impulses, but according to certain rules approved of by good authority, and supposed to be consistent with sound economic principles. To my old friend

——, who once liked me for myself, without asking why, I have long ceased to be an individual, and am now simply an item of humanity to whom he owes such duty as my particular wants or vices would seem to indicate. But if he had a dog, he could not regard him in that impersonal way, or worry about the dog's morals; he would simply take pleasure in his society, and love him for what he was, without considering what he might have been.

I know and honor one philanthropist who, in middle life or thereabout, became for the first time the possessor of a dog; and thenceforth there was disclosed in him a genuine vein of

sentiment and affection which many years of doing good and virtuous living had failed to eradicate. Often had I heard of his civic deeds and of his well-directed charities, but my heart never quite warmed toward him, until I learned that, with spectacles on nose and comb in hand, he had spent three laborious hours in painfully going over his spaniel, and eliminating those parasitic guests which sometimes infest the coat of the cleanest and most aristocratic dog. I am not ashamed to say that I have a confidence in his wisdom now which I did not have before, knowing that his head will never be allowed to tyrannize over his heart. His name

SYLVAN ROAMER

should be recorded here, were it not that his modesty might be offended by the act. (Three letters would suffice to print it.)

In speaking of the dog as a kind of missionary in the household, I mean, it need hardly be said, something more than the mere ownership of the animal. It will not suffice to pay a large sum for a dog of fashionable breed, to equip him with a costly collar, and then to relegate him to the stable or the kitchen. He should be one of the family, living on equal terms with the others, and their constant companion. The dog's life is short at the best, and every moment of it will be needed for his de-

velopment. It is wonderful how year by year the household pet grows in intelligence, how many words he learns the meaning of, how quick he becomes in interpreting the look, the tone of voice, the mood, of the person whom he loves. He is old at ten or eleven, and seldom lives beyond thirteen or fourteen. If he lived to be fifty, he would know so much that we should be uneasy, perhaps terrified, in his presence.

A certain amount of discipline is necessary for a dog. If left to his own devices, he is apt to become somewhat dissipated, to spend his evenings out, to scatter among many the affection which should be reserved for a few.

But, on the other hand, a dog may easily receive too much discipline: he becomes like the child of a despotic father. A dog perfectly trained from the martinet point of view, — one who never "jumps up" on you, never lays an entreating paw on your arm, never gets into a chair, nor enters the drawing-room, — such a dog is a sad sight to one who really knows and loves the animal. It is against his nature to be so repressed. Over-careful housewives, and persons who are burdened with costly surroundings, talk of injury to carpets and other furniture if the dog has a right of entry everywhere in the house. But

what is furniture for? Is it for display, is it a guaranty of the wealth of the owners, or is it for use? Blessed are they whose furniture is so inexpensive or so shabby that children and dogs are not excluded from its sacred precincts. Perhaps the happiest household to which I ever had the honor of being admitted was one where it was sometimes a little difficult to find a comfortable vacant chair: the dogs always took the arm-chairs. Alas, where are those hospitable chairs now? Where are the dogs that used to sit up in them, and wink and yawn, and give their paws in humorous embarrassment?

"'The drawing-room was made for

dogs, and not dogs for the drawing-room,' would be Lady Barnes's thesis, did she formulate it." It was this same Lady Barnes (Rhoda Broughton's) who once said, "'I have no belief in Eliza, the housemaid I leave in charge here. When last I came down from London the dogs were so unnaturally good that I felt sure she bullied them. I spoke very seriously to her, and this time, I am glad to say, they are as disobedient as ever, and have done even more mischief than when I am at home.' And she laughs with a delicate relish of her own folly."

Of all writers of fiction, by the way, is there any whose dogs quite equal

those of Rhoda Broughton? Even the beloved author of "Rab and His Friends," even Sir Walter himself, with his immortal Dandie Dinmonts, has not, it seems to me, given us such life-like and homelike pictures of dogs as those which occur in her novels. They seem to be there, not of set purpose, but as if dogs were such an essential part of her own existence that they crept into her books almost without her knowing it. No room in her novels is complete without a dog or two; and every remark that she makes about them has the quality of a caress. Even in a tragic moment, the heroine cannot help observing, that "Mink

is lying on his small hairy side in a sun-patch, with his little paws crossed like a dying saint's." "Mr. Brown," that dear, faithful mongrel, is forever associated with the unfortunate Joan; and Brenda's "wouff" will go resounding down the halls of time so long as novels are read.

Perhaps the final test of anybody's love of dogs is willingness to permit them to make a camping-ground of the bed. There is no other place in the world that suits the dog quite so well. On the bed he is safe from being stepped upon; he is out of the way of drafts; he occupies a commanding position from which to survey what

goes on in the world; and, above all, the surface is soft and yielding to his outstretched limbs. No mere man can ever be so comfortable as a dog looks.

Some persons object to having a dog on the bed at night; and it must be admitted that he lies a little heavily on one's limbs; but why be so base as to prefer comfort to companionship! To wake up in the dark night, and put your hand on that warm soft body, to feel the beating of that faithful heart, — is not this better than undisturbed sloth? The best night's rest I ever had was once when a cocker spaniel puppy, who had just recovered

from stomach-ache [dose one to two soda-mints], and was a little frightened by the strange experience, curled up on my shoulder like a fur tippet, gently pushed his cold, soft nose into my neck, and there slept sweetly and soundly until morning.

Companionship with his master is the dog's remedy for every ill, and only an extreme case will justify sending him away or boarding him out. To put a dog in a hospital, unless there is some surgical or other like necessity for doing so, is an act of doubtful kindness. Many and many a dog has died from homesickness. If he is ill, keep him warm and quiet, give him such

simple remedies as you would give to a child, pour beef tea or malted milk down his throat, or even a little whiskey, if he is weak from want of food; and let him live or die, as did our fathers and our fathers' dogs, — at home.

Many dogs are sensitive to an excessive degree, so sensitive indeed that any correction of them, beyond such as can be conveyed by a word, amounts to positive cruelty. A dog of that kind may easily be thrown by harsh treatment into a state of nervous disorder, and will be really unable to do what is required of him. In that state he often presents an appearance of obstinacy, whereas in fact he is suffering from a

sort of nervous atrophy or paralysis, closely resembling that of a "balky" horse.

This nervous temperament makes the dog susceptible to misery in many forms, but the worst evil that can befall him is to be lost. The very words "lost dog" call up such pictures of canine misery as can never be forgotten by those who have witnessed them. I have seen a lost dog, lame, emaciated, wounded, footsore, hungry, and thirsty, and yet suffering so intensely from fear, and loneliness, and despair, — from the mere sense of being lost, — as to be absolutely unconscious of his bodily condition. The mental agony was so

much greater that it swallowed up the physical pain. A little Boston terrier, lost in a large city for two or three days, became so wrecked in his nervous system that no amount of care or petting could restore him to equanimity, and it was found necessary to kill him. Oh, reader, pass not by the lost dog! Succor him if you can; preserve him from what is worse than death. It is easy to recognize him by the look of nervous terror in his eye, by his drooping tail, by his uncertain movements.

There is a remorseful experience of my own, of which I should be glad to unburden myself to the reader. It once became my duty to kill a dog afflicted

with some incurable disease. Instead of doing it myself, as I should have done, I took him to a place where lost dogs are received, and where those for whom no home can be found are mercifully destroyed. There, instead of myself leading him to the death chamber, as, again, I should have done, I handed him over to the executioner. The dog was an abnormally nervous and timid one; and as he was dragged most unwillingly away, he turned around, as nearly as he could, and cast back at me a look of horror, of fear, of agonized appeal, — a look that has haunted me for years.

Whether he had any inkling of what

was in store for him, I do not know, but it is highly probable that he had. Dogs and other animals are wonderful mind-readers. I have known three cases in which some discussion about the necessity of killing an old dog, held in his presence, was quickly followed by the sudden, unaccountable disappearance of the animal; and no tidings of him could ever be obtained, although the greatest pains were taken to obtain them. Horses are inferior only to dogs in this capacity. Often, especially in the case of vicious or half-broken horses, an intention will flash from the mind of the horse to the mind of the rider or driver, and *vice*

versa, without the slightest indication being given by horse or man. Men who ride race-horses have told me that a sudden conviction in their own minds, in the course of a race, that they could not win, has passed immediately to the horse, and caused him to slacken his speed, although they had not ceased to urge him. It is notorious in the trotting world that faint-hearted and pessimistic drivers often lose races which they ought to win.

As to remarkable stories about this or that animal, perhaps it might be said that they are probably true when they illustrate the animal's perceptive abilities, and are probably false when

they depend upon his power to originate. There appeared lately an account of a race between loons in the wild state: how the loons got together and arranged the preliminaries (whether they made books on the event or adopted the pool system of betting was not stated), how the race was run, or rather flown, amid intense loon excitement, and how the victor was greeted with screams of applause!

Some power of origination animals, and dogs especially, certainly have. There is the familiar trick that dogs play, when one, to get a bone away from another, rushes off a little space, gives the bark which signifies the pre-

sence of an intruder, then comes back and quietly runs away with the bone which the other dog, in his curiosity to see who is coming, has impulsively dropped. This is an example not only of reasoning, but of origination.

In general, however, when dogs surprise us, as they frequently do, it is by the delicacy and acuteness of their perceptive powers. How unerringly do they distinguish between different classes of persons, as, for example, between the members of the family and the servants; and again, between the servants and the friends of the household! Unquestionably the dog has three sets of manners for these

three classes of persons. He will take liberties in the kitchen that he would never dream of taking in the dining-room. We have known our cook to fly in terror from the kitchen because Figaro, a masterful cocker spaniel, threatened to bite her if she did not give him a piece of meat forthwith. Figaro reasoned that the cook was partly *his* cook, and that he had a right to bully her if he could.

As for the different members of the family, the dog will "size them up" with an unerring instinct. It is impossible to conceal any weakness of character from him; and if you are strong, he will know that too. As I

write these lines, the vision of "Mr. Guppy" rises before me. Mr. Guppy was a very small Boston terrier, with a white head, but otherwise of a brindle color. He had a beautiful "mug," much like that of a bull-dog, with a short nose, wide jaws, and plenty of loose skin hanging about his stout little neck. It must be admitted that he was somewhat self-indulgent, being continually on the watch for a chance to lie close by the fire, — a situation considered by his friends to be unwholesome for him. Mr. Guppy understood me very well. He knew that I was a poor, weak, easy-going, absent-minded creature, with whom he could

take liberties; and accordingly, when we were alone together, the rogue would lie sleeping with his head on the hearth, while I was absorbed in my book. But hark! there is a step on the stairs, of one whom Mr. Guppy both loved and feared more than any dog ever loved or feared me; and forthwith the little impostor would rise, and crawl softly back to his place on a rug in the corner; and there he would be found lying and winking, with an expression of perfect innocence when the disciplinarian entered the room.

Dogs have the same sensitiveness that we associate with well-bred men and women. Their politeness is re-

TOBY

markable. Offer a dog water when he is not thirsty, and he will almost always take a lap or two, just out of civility, and to show his gratitude. I know a group of dogs that never forget to come and tell their mistress when they have had their dinner, feeling sure that she will sympathize with them; and if they have failed to get it, they will notify her immediately of the omission. If you happen to step on a dog's tail or paw, how eagerly — after one irrepressible yelp of pain — will he tell you by his caresses that he knows you did not mean to hurt him and forgives you!

In their relations with one another, also, dogs have a keen sense of eti-

quette. A well-known traveler makes this unexpected remark about a tribe of naked black men, living on one of the South Sea Islands: "In their everyday intercourse there is much that is stiff, formal, and precise." Almost the same remark might be made about dogs. Unless they are on very intimate terms, they take great pains never to brush against or even to touch one another. For one dog to step over another is a dangerous breach of etiquette unless they are special friends. It is no uncommon thing for two dogs to belong to the same person, and live in the same house, and yet never take the slightest notice of each other. We

have a spaniel so dignified that he will never permit another member of the dog family to pillow his head on him; but, with the egotism of a true aristocrat, he does not hesitate to make use of the other dogs for that purpose.

Often canine etiquette is so subtle that one has much difficulty in following it out. In our household are two uncongenial dogs, who, in ordinary circumstances, completely ignore each other, and between whom any familiarity would be resented fiercely. And yet, when we are all out walking, if I am obliged to scold or punish one of these two, the other will run up to the offender, bark at him, and even jostle

him, as if he were saying, "Well, old man, you got it that time; are n't you ashamed of yourself?" And the other dog, feeling that he is in the wrong, I suppose, submits meekly to the insult.

A family of six dogs used to pair off in couples, each couple being on terms of special intimacy and affection; and beside these relationships there were many others among them. For example, they all deferred to the oldest dog, although he was smaller and weaker than the rest. If a fight began, he would jump in between the contestants and stop it; if a dog misbehaved, he would rush at the offender with a

warning growl; and this exercise of authority was never resented. The other dogs seemed to respect his weight of years, his character, which was of the highest, and his moral courage, which was undoubted. This same dog — his name was Pedro — had many human traits. He and his companions slept together on a sofa upstairs, where, of a cold night, they would curl up together in an indistinguishable heap. Sometimes the old dog would put himself to bed before the others, and then, finding that he needed the warmth and companionship of their presence, he would go into the hall, put his head between the balusters, and whine

softly until they came upstairs to join him.

That animals reason is a fact of everyday experience. That they can communicate their wants and feelings to one another and to man is equally plain. "When a cat or a dog," wrote the late Mr. Romanes, "pulls one's dress to lead one to the kittens or puppies in need of assistance, the animal is behaving in the same manner as a deaf mute might behave when invoking assistance from a friend. That is to say, the animal is translating the logic of feelings into the logic of signs; and so far as this particular action is concerned, it is psychologically indistin-

guishable from that which is performed by the deaf mute."

Mentally, we are not so many epochs removed from the other animals, and emotionally the connection is closer yet. I will not discuss the question whether dumb animals have any sense of right and wrong. I believe that they have this sense in a rudimentary degree; or at least that it is latent in them, and may be developed. The popular instinctive notions about animals, the result of the experience of the race, seem to justify this view. "If we say a *vicious* horse," remarked Dr. Arnold, "why not a *virtuous* horse?" — And we do speak of a "kind" horse.

Moreover, it is obvious that dogs have a sense of humor; and they have also a sense of shame, perfectly distinct from the fear of punishment. Of their sense of shame let me give one example. The dog's eyesight, so far at least as stationary objects are concerned, is very poor, his real reliance being upon his sense of smell, and I have often seen a dog mistake one of his own family for a strange animal, run toward him, with every sign of hostility, and then, when he came within a few feet of the other dog, suddenly drop his tail between his legs, and slink away, as if he feared that somebody had noticed his absurd mistake.

Can it be that an animal should possess a sense of humor and a sense of shame, without having also some elementary sense of right and wrong? But even if it be thought that he is devoid of that sense, it is certain that he has those kindly impulses from which it has been developed. All that is best in man springs from something which is practically the same in the dog that it is in him, namely, the instinct of pity or benevolence. To that instinct, as it exists in the lower animals, Darwin attributed the origin of conscience in man; and there are now few, if any, philosophers who would give a different account of it.

I have seen a pup not six months old run to comfort another pup that cried out from pain; and the impulse that prompted this act was essentially the same as that which impels the noblest of mankind when they befriend the poor or the afflicted. We are akin to the lower animals morally, as well as physically and mentally.

But this is a modern discovery. It is astonishing and confusing to realize how little organized Christianity has done for the lower animals. The ecclesiastical conception of them was simply that they were creatures without souls, and therefore had no rights as against, or at the hands of, mankind.

To this day that conception remains, although it is qualified, of course, by other and more humane considerations. Even Cardinal Newman said, —

"We have no duties toward the brute creation; there is no relation of justice between them and us. Of course, we are bound not to treat them ill, for cruelty is an offense against the holy law which our Maker has written on our hearts, and it is displeasing to Him. But they can claim nothing at our hand; into our hand they are absolutely delivered. We may use them, we may destroy them at our pleasure: not our wanton pleasure, but still for our own ends, for our own benefit and

satisfaction, provided that we can give a rational account of what we do."

This position, though not perhaps cruel in itself, inevitably results in unlimited cruelties. When an English traveler remonstrated with a Spanish lady for throwing a sick kitten out of the second-story window, she justified herself by saying that the kitten had no soul; and that is the national point of view.

Protestantism has been almost as indifferent as Catholicism to the lower animals. In fact, the conscience which exists outside of the church, Catholic or Protestant, has in this matter outstripped the conscience of the church.

"Cruelty," said Du Maurier, "is the only unpardonable sin"; and the world is slowly but surely coming to that opinion. The long-deferred awakening of mankind to the sufferings of dumb animals was not due to a decline of the ecclesiastical conception of them, although it has declined; nor even to the new knowledge concerning the common origin of man and beast; indeed, it slightly preceded that knowledge; but it was due to the gradual enlightenment and moral improvement of the race, especially of the English-speaking race.

The nineteenth century, as we are often told, saw more discoveries and

inventions than had been made in the preceding six thousand years; but I believe that in future ages not one of those discoveries and inventions, nor all together, will bulk so large as factors in the development and uplifting of man, as will those humane laws and societies which first came into existence in that century.

We overvalue intellectual as compared with moral and emotional gifts. The material civilization upon which we pride ourselves is almost wholly the achievement of the intellect. Fame and wealth, luxury, cultivation, and leisure, — all the big prizes of the world, in fact, — are obtained by the successful

exercise of the intellect. The moral qualities, of themselves, can procure us nothing but a clear conscience, and the approval, perhaps mixed with contempt, of our neighbors.

And yet, when the intellectual qualities are brought to the test of reality; when one's view of them is not clouded by pride, avarice, or passion, how amazingly does their value shrink and shrivel! When a man lies on his deathbed, for example, his intellectual achievements, though of the highest order, will seem as nothing to him, — he will ask himself simply whether he has lived a good or a bad life; and after his death his family and his friends

will look at the matter in precisely the same way.

Even the progress of mankind is far more moral than intellectual. Competent authorities tell us that the Anglo-Saxon of to-day is mentally inferior to the Greek who lived two thousand years ago: and if the human race has improved during that time, it is not so much because man has advanced in knowledge as because he has acquired more sympathy with his inferiors, be they brute or human, more generosity, more mercy toward them. Not Stephenson, nor Faraday, nor Morse, nor Fulton, nor Bell, did so much for the human race, to say nothing of the

other animals, as did that dueling Irishman [1] who, in the year 1822, proposed in the English Parliament, amidst howls and shrieks of derision, what afterward became the first law for the protection of dumb animals ever placed on the statute-books of any country. Every movement for the relief of the brute creation has originated in England; and when we damn John Bull for one thing and another, as we righteously may, let us remember this fact to his eternal honor!

It is hard to part from an old dog-friend with no hope of ever meeting

[1] Richard Martin, whom his friend George IV nicknamed "Humanity Martin."

him again, hard to believe that the spirit of love which burned so steadfastly in him is quenched forever. But for those who hold what I have called the ecclesiastical conception of the lower animals, no other view is possible. That devout Catholic and exquisite poet, Dr. Parsons, has beautifully expressed this fact: —

When parents die there's many a word to say —
Kind words, consoling — one can always pray;
When children die 't is natural to tell
Their mother, "Certainly with them 't is well!"
But for a dog, 't was all the life he had,
Since death is end of dogs, or good or bad.
This was his world, he was contented here;
Imagined nothing better, naught more dear,
Than his young mistress; sought no higher sphere;

Having no sin, asked not to be forgiven;
Ne'er guessed at God nor ever dreamed of heaven.
Now he has passed away, so much of love
Goes from our life, without one hope above!

But is there no hope? Is there not as much — or, if the reader prefers, as little — hope for the dog as there is for man? Years ago I remember reading in a prominent magazine the statement that doubtless a few men, the very wickedest, will become extinct at death, whereas the rest of mankind will be immortal. This view had some adherents then, but would now be regarded by almost everybody as irrational. Who can believe that between the best and the worst man there is any

such gulf as would justify so diverse a fate! Moreover we have learned that there are no chasms or jumps in nature. One thing slides into another; every creature is a link between two other creatures; and man himself can be traced back physically, mentally, and morally, to the lower animals. Is it not then reasonable to suppose that immortality belongs to all forms of life or to none? that, if man is immortal, the dog is immortal, too? Even to speculate upon this subject seems almost ridiculous, our knowledge is so limited; and yet it is hard to refrain from speculating. The transmigration of souls may be a fact, or men and dogs

and all other forms of life may be simply forms, temporary phases, proceeding from one source, and returning thereto. But alas! every supposition that we can make is rendered almost, if not quite untenable, by the mere fact that the human intellect has conceived of it, — it is so unlikely that we should hit upon the right solution!

In this situation, what we seem bound to do is to refrain from hasty, and especially from egotistic conclusions, to keep our minds open, to regard the lower animals not only with pity but with a certain reverence. We do not know what or whence they are; but we do know that their nature re-

sembles ours; that they have Individuality, as we have it; that they feel pain, both physical and mental; that they are capable of affection; that, although innocent, as we believe, their sufferings have been, and are, unspeakable. Is there no mystery here?

To many men, to most men, perhaps, a dog is simply an animated machine, developed or created for the convenience of the human race. It may be so; and yet again it may be that the dog has his own rightful place in the universe, irrespective and independent of man, and that an injury done to him is an insult to the Creator.

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